GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:402
ANSWERED ON:07.07.2009
REVAMPING OF PDS
Jaiswal Shri Gorakh Prasad ;Kishor Shri Kamal ;Kodikunnil Shri Suresh;Pandey Shri Ravindra Kumar;Reddy Shri K. Jayasurya Prakash;Singh Shri Pashupati Nath;Vasava Shri Mansukhbhai D.

Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Union Government is aware that in the absence of identification of Below Poverty Line families, the Public Distribution System in several States is on the verge of collapse;

(b) whether Union Government has issued any directives to State Governments to expedite the identification of Below Poverty Line families and improve the functioning of the Public Distribution System in the States;

(c) if so, the details and the outcome thereof;

(d) whether the Government proposes to revamp Public Distribution System in view of large scale corruption; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD & PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (PROF. K.V. THOMAS)

(a),(b),(c),(d)&(e): Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS) is implemented jointly by Government of India and State/UT Governments with sharing of responsibilities in this regard. The Government of India carries out procurement of foodgrains for the TPDS, their storage, transportation and allocation to the State/UT Governments. The responsibilities for allocation of foodgrains within State/UT, identification of eligible BPL & AAY families based on estimates of Planning Commission and issuance of ration cards to them, and supervision of distribution of allocated foodgrains to eligible ration card holders through the fair price shops rest with the State / UT Governments.

For identification of BPL families, guidelines are to be formulated by State/UT Governments as stipulated under the Public Distribution System (Control), Order 2001. To facilitate this, Ministries of Rural Development and Housing & Urban Poverty Alleviation issue guidelines in consultation with Planning Commission.

For allocations of foodgrains to States and UTs under TPDS, the Department of Food & Public Distribution uses the number of BPL families based on 1993-94 poverty estimates of Planning Commission and population estimates of the Registrar General of India as on 1st March 2000. This number of BPL families is 6.52 crore.

However, as reported by June 2009, the State and UT Governments have issued 10.86 crore BPL ration cards, which include 2.43 crore AAY cards.

Because of higher number of BPL ration cards issued by some State Governments, the scale of issue of foodgrains for BPL families per month is lower than 35 kg in those States.

To improve functioning of TPDS, Government has been regularly requesting State & UT Governments. Government has initiated a series of measures to streamline TPDS by

(i) continuous review of lists of BPL and AAY families and ensuring timely availability of foodgrains at fair price shops;

(ii) ensuring greater transparency in functioning of TPDS;

(iii) improved monitoring and vigilance at various levels.

(iv) introduction of new technologies such as Computerization of TPDS operations at various levels, smart-card-based delivery of essential commodities, and

(v) getting periodically evaluated functioning of TPDS.